



NEW ASHFORD

Berkshire County



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NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of New Ashford, with its rough and mountainous terrain, was established in 1781. The town lies in the northern part of Berkshire County and has always been one of the smallest communities in the Commonwealth. New Ashford is well supplied with water, since the Green River rises in town before flowing north, but has never had very much arable land. Despite that, the earliest settlers, Evans Roys and Hezekiah Beach, arrived from Connecticut in 1762 and Peregrine Turner felt optimistic enough to open the first store in town shortly after. Several town residents were actively engaged in the battles of the Revolution and were present at the Battle of Bennington in 1777 and the surrender of Burgoyne. In the 19th century, a census of the town showed that of 44 adults listed in a business directory, 38 reported farming as their primary occupation, with only a half dozen working as laborers in the saw and grist mills or selling farm equipment. In 1885, the Berkshire County Gazetteer noted that "no doctor or lawyer has ever been located in town". New Ashford is sited in a picturesque gorge, lying between the giant foothills of Saddle Ball and a spur of the Taconics. The beauty of its natural surroundings very early on dictated a new business for residents, the tourist business, and the first hotel was opened by William Starkweather. A tourist guide of 1889 describes the views in town as creating the effect of "the Switzerland of Berkshire". The view from the summit of Saddle Ball, one of the prominent peaks in northern Berkshire County, was generally felt to be one of the grandest in the area. In addition to Saddle Ball, a portion of 2700' high Brodie Mountain is in New Ashford, which became the site of a growing winter recreation industry in the 1930's, bringing in skiers and ski racers from around the state. The town had some valuable beds of marble and an interesting cave over 100' long, with 20' high arches inside and glittering stalactites adding to its enticements for tourists.

(Narrative compiled from historical materials)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

Northwestern Massachusetts, bordered by Williamstown on the north, Adams on the east, Cheshire on the southeast, Lanesborough on the south, and Hancock on the west. New Ashford is 12 miles north of Pittsfield, 14 miles southwest of North Adams, and 147 miles northwest of Boston.

Total Area: 13.54 sq. miles

Land Area: 13.54 sq. miles

Population: 192

Density: 14 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Great Barrington Station)

Normal temperature in January.....20.1°F

Normal temperature in July.....68.1°F

Normal annual precipitation.....44.8"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Cheshire, Hancock, Williamstown, Berlin

Regional Planning Agency

Berkshire County

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (413) 458-5461

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Administrative Assistant

Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1835

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%	
Total Registered	168		
Democrats	40	23.8	%
Republicans	16	9.5	%
Other parties	0	0.0	%
Unenrolled Voters	112	66.7	%

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: New Ashford town, Berkshire County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	247	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	247	100.0
Male.....	124	50.2	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	-	-
Female.....	123	49.8	Mexican.....	-	-
Under 5 years.....	15	6.1	Puerto Rican.....	-	-
5 to 9 years.....	18	7.3	Cuban.....	-	-
10 to 14 years.....	19	7.7	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	-	-
15 to 19 years.....	15	6.1	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	247	100.0
20 to 24 years.....	7	2.8	White alone.....	236	95.5
25 to 34 years.....	34	13.8	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	39	15.8	Total population.....	247	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	58	23.5	In households.....	247	100.0
55 to 59 years.....	11	4.5	Householder.....	94	38.1
60 to 64 years.....	8	3.2	Spouse.....	62	25.1
65 to 74 years.....	9	3.6	Child.....	75	30.4
75 to 84 years.....	13	5.3	Own child under 18 years.....	56	22.7
85 years and over.....	1	0.4	Other relatives.....	7	2.8
Median age (years).....	37.5	(X)	Under 18 years.....	5	2.0
18 years and over.....	185	74.9	Nonrelatives.....	9	3.6
Male.....	88	35.6	Unmarried partner.....	3	1.2
Female.....	97	39.3	In group quarters.....	-	-
21 years and over.....	179	72.5	Institutionalized population.....	-	-
62 years and over.....	27	10.9	Noninstitutionalized population.....	-	-
65 years and over.....	23	9.3	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	12	4.9	Total households.....	94	100.0
Female.....	11	4.5	Family households (families).....	72	76.6
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	34	36.2
One race.....	246	99.6	Married-couple family.....	62	66.0
White.....	236	95.5	With own children under 18 years.....	28	29.8
Black or African American.....	2	0.8	Female householder, no husband present.....	9	9.6
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	-	-	With own children under 18 years.....	5	5.3
Asian.....	8	3.2	Nonfamily households.....	22	23.4
Asian Indian.....	8	3.2	Householder living alone.....	15	16.0
Chinese.....	-	-	Householder 65 years and over.....	7	7.4
Filipino.....	-	-	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	37	39.4
Japanese.....	-	-	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	18	19.1
Korean.....	-	-	Average household size.....	2.63	(X)
Vietnamese.....	-	-	Average family size.....	3.00	(X)
Other Asian ¹	-	-	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-	Total housing units.....	110	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	94	85.5
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	16	14.5
Samoa.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	-	-	occasional use.....	3	2.7
Some other race.....	-	-	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	6.8	(X)
Two or more races.....	1	0.4	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	10.3	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one			HOUSING TENURE		
or more other races: ³			Occupied housing units.....	94	100.0
White.....	237	96.0	Owner-occupied housing units.....	68	72.3
Black or African American.....	3	1.2	Renter-occupied housing units.....	26	27.7
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	-	-	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.87	(X)
Asian.....	8	3.2	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.00	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-			
Some other race.....	-	-			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State:	0
Conventional Federal:	0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP:	0
Federal (Section 8):	0



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

New Ashford is situated in Berkshire County, a region of hills and low mountains that widen to create the Berkshire Valley in the south. The major cities and towns are linked together by U.S. Route 7. North Adams and Pittsfield are major points of entry for rail freight into Massachusetts, and the region has several commercial airports.

Major Highways

The principal highway is U.S. Route 7 running N-S through the Berkshires.

Rail

There is no passenger or freight rail service in New Ashford, but the network of intermodal facilities serving Massachusetts and New York is easily accessible.

Bus

New Ashford is not affiliated with any regional transit authority.

Other

Harriman & West Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility located in the neighboring town of North Adams, has a 4,300'x 100' asphalt runway. Instrument approaches available: None.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

None

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

None

Long Term Care

None

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

None

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.